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SERMON DCLXVI.

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A PLEA FOR SEAMEN.*

"They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters."—Psalm cvii, 23.

THESE are the persons in whose behalf I am to speak this evening. Their friends are every where endeavoring to awaken the attention of the public to the claims of seamen on the prayers, the sympathies, and the benevolence of their fellow creatures. They are persuaded, that information upon this subject is all that is required to secure from Christians the same concern about the spiritual and temporal welfare of sailors, that they manifest in regard to all other members of the human family; and it is owing to this desire to spread this information as widely as possible from the pulpit, as well as from the press, that I have been called upon to address you upon the present occasion.

I. You may perhaps think it strange that I should observe in the first place, with respect to sailors, that they are *human beings*.

* This eloquent discourse was first preached in the city of Philadelphia, January 25, 1846, in behalf of the Pennsylvania Seamen's Friend Society. It was repeated about three years ago, in the city of New York. In both cities numerous auditors gave most hearty responses to its excellence by large donations to the Seamen's cause. The Editor of this work takes great pleasure in being able to present to his readers, both in America and Europe, so excellent a Sermon on this subject; and hopes its publication will still more extensively and deeply interest the minds of the Christian public in the welfare of Seamen, and result in increased contributions for their benefit.

But the neglect which they have met with from their fellow creatures seems to make that observation necessary. Obligated from the nature of their calling to be wanderers on the face of the earth, and to spend a large proportion of their lives on the solitary deep—never staying long in one place, and separated from landmen by the uncongeniality existing between their pursuits and habits, they have been forgotten—being out of sight, they have been out of mind. A few years ago you could scarcely find in the catalogue of Christian charities one of them devoted to seamen's interests, and even now those interests are only beginning to attract attention. I observe, therefore, that they are human beings, of the same flesh and blood as ourselves, and on that ground alone entitled to our sympathies. It is a spurious benevolence that limits its regards to peculiar objects. Connected by the link of a common brotherhood, we should feel for all who are comprehended in the fraternal chain. The orphan, the widow, the aged, the sick, the blind, the poor, and the ignorant, should not be allowed to engross our sympathies. It is not only the necessities of this or of that class of men that should awaken our compassion, but the necessities of all. The benevolence of God, which as being perfect, should regulate the benevolence of his creatures, is expansive. It shines like the sun upon the good and upon the evil; it descends like the rain upon the just and upon the unjust. And redeeming love is equally comprehensive—"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners,"—not sinners of any particular class, but sinners of all classes; and as every sinner in distress excites his compassion, so every fellow creature in distress should excite ours. Sailors are human beings.

II. I observe again that they are *Immortal beings*.

This gives them their highest claim to our compassion. To clothe the naked, to feed the hungry, to console the miserable and to relieve the indigent, are charitable objects, but they are not the most exalted objects of human charity; and for this reason they are not the most important—the highest object of charity is that which has absorbed the solitudes of Heaven; which has excited in the bosom of every angel and archangel about the throne the deepest interest; which has awakened the sympathies of the Son of God to such a pitch as to make him willing to die for its relief. The soul is the highest object of charity. What comparison is there between the worth of the soul and that of the body? The soul, with its vast powers, and the body, with its feeble capacities; the soul, with its endless existence, and the body, with its brief duration; the soul, with its untold destinies, and the body, with its paltry interests. The salvation of a single soul would be a higher act of benevolence than to abolish all the physical suffering and to dispel all the mental darkness that exists in the world; because the salvation of that soul would secure its

happiness, not only for the brief space allotted to us in this life, but forever and ever. And the noblest Christian charities of the day are founded upon this principle. The societies for furnishing every nation under heaven with the word of God in its own tongue, the societies for the propagation of the gospel in foreign parts, the societies for sending missionary heralds into heathen lands—they are all founded upon the principle that the value of the soul gives it a claim upon our sympathies, and exertions, and prayers, far exceeding that of any other charitable object whatever. And if so, whence this neglect of those who go down to the sea in ships? Is one soul more valuable than another, that we charter vessels to send preachers and Bibles into distant countries, whilst we make no effort for the conversion of those by whom they are navigated? Are the souls of Hottentots and Caffres of more esteem than the souls of seamen? The truth is, my brethren, that the benevolence of many is too much regulated by fancy and too little by principle. The conversion of cannibals and barbarians, who celebrate their detestable orgies before hideous idols is an enterprise so fraught with romance and heroism, so full of sentiment and adventure, that in comparison, the claim of seamen appears to be an insipid subject. But fancy is no fit umpire in this cause. The principle is the thing by which we should be governed, and that teaches us that a soul ready to perish, whether it be the soul of the barbarian or the Greek, the Jew or the Gentile, the bond or the free, is equally precious. With the strangest inconsistency men have associated for the prevention of cruelty to animals, whilst the souls of seamen were allowed to perish. They have forgotten altogether that seamen have souls, and leaving those souls to die, they have busied themselves in relieving the sufferings of the horse and the dog. I am far from insinuating any thing to the disparagement of other charities. Benevolence, as has been already observed, cannot be too extensive. We only complain that it has not been extensive enough, that whilst it has groaned over the degradation of the idolater, and has even condescended to weep over the sufferings of the brute, it has scarcely so much as cast its eye upon the distress of the seaman. Are his numbers then so small as to have caused the oversight? On the contrary, there are two millions of sailors in the world—there are one hundred and fifty thousand in your own land. Are numbers like these so insignificant as to escape notice or deserve neglect? *Deserve neglect!* I recall that expression. If there were but one soul in danger of perdition, if, excepting one soul, the entire population of the globe were converted to Christ—it would be an achievement worthy of the ambition of all the rest—it would be a deed honorable to their benevolence—it would be an exploit that would cover them with glory and make heaven ring with the songs and acclamations of angels to snatch that one soul from destruction. Sailors are immortal beings.

III. But I observe again that they are unfortunate beings. Unfortunate in this, the neglect that they have experienced.

When you see them reeling in the streets or carousing on shore, when you listen to their boisterous mirth, their obscene songs and their profane language, do not ascribe these proofs of profligacy and thoughtlessness to their being naturally worse than other men. Ascribe them to their being more neglected than other men—to the little care that has been taken for the promotion of their happiness, the improvement of their minds, the culture of their affections and the formation of their habits. Ascribe them to their being thrown early in life upon a cold, unfeeling, and selfish world, which has been too much occupied in the prosecution of its own interests, to think of theirs. Ascribe them to their being prematurely divorced from the beloved inmates, the quiet pleasures, the sacred duties, the holy influences of home. It is to these that we are all of us, more or less, indebted for the development of our intellectual character, the culture of our feelings, and the possession of our religious principles. If we have escaped from ignorance and vice, and from their accompanying degradation and wretchedness, it has been owing to the watchful superintendence that we experienced in youth. But the sailor, often abandoning his home whilst yet a child, is often abandoned even in childhood, to immoral influences. He hears what? a mother's prayers? a mother's counsels? a father's admonitions? a father's warnings? No. He hears sacred things ridiculed, religion laughed at, vice applauded, and the name of God blasphemed. He hears it from stern to stern, in the steerage and in the fore-castle, and too often on the quarter-deck. Instead of seeing the highest principles and best feelings of our nature exemplified in those who are his shipmates and constant associates, he too often has nothing before his eyes but the example of hardened and profligate and abandoned men. There is enough of vice on shore, but there you can get out of the hearing and away from the influence of what is evil. You can choose your comrades from the good and virtuous; but cooped up within the narrow confines of a ship the sailor must be a willing or unwilling witness of all its scenes, and be content with, perhaps, the worst companions. Let me ask you, then, is it wonderful that he should be intemperate, prodigal, dissolute and profane? No pains have been taken until lately to make him otherwise. On shore you have schools for the ignorant, libraries for the young, lyceums for the apprentice, institutes for the mechanic. You have lectures on science, lectures on religion, religious teachers, religious services and public opinion. All contribute to protect the morals, to enlighten the minds and to form the principles of men on shore.

You have not only societies to prevent vice, but to reform the vicious—to reclaim the inebriate, and to bring back the wanderer into the paths of virtue—but, until lately, no attempt has been

made either to instruct or reform the sailor. He has been left to sink deeper and deeper into the slough of profligacy, the subject of everybody's abuse, but of nobody's compassion—reviled by all, aided by none. And this cruel indifference has made him reckless. Not respected by others, he has lost respect for himself—treated as a proscribed person, an outcast, he has abandoned himself to what he considers his fate, and losing all sense of shame, has wrought iniquity with greediness.

I repeat, therefore, that sailors are unfortunate beings. They have been like ships foundering at sea, many a sail in sight, without any of them having humanity enough to lend assistance—like drowning mariners for whom nobody would take the trouble to lower a boat. What do I see? A vessel in distress—without aid her loss is certain, and the crew accordingly yield to despair. Such has been the effect of the indifference of the public to seamen's interests: it has made them desperate. But see! help arrives, and the scene changes; the crew work with animation and hope, their prospects brighten, their damages are repaired, and soon they are in a condition to move onward. And this has been the effect of such societies as that I advocate;—their effect has been to encourage sailors to labor in the work of their own salvation. Were you to read their reports, you would find that sailors appreciate and second the exertions that are made in their behalf—that wherever churches are built for them they will attend; that wherever ministers will visit them they will listen; that they receive tracts and other religious books with joy; and that they look upon the holy Scriptures as a more valuable guide than the compass by which they steer, or than the chart by which they sail—and there has been a corresponding result. He who accompanies the employment of his appointed means with his promised blessing, has already crowned the efforts of these societies with astonishing success. Many from the abundance of the sea have been converted unto God; and, as a necessary consequence, reclaimed from vice. It is a sacred truth, that the readiest way of amending man's temporal condition is by exalting his spiritual. Religion is followed by a train of attendant blessings, a glorious procession;—she is clothed in white, the emblem of purity; a single flower, the well-known symbol of innocence and loveliness, adorns her hair; and, as she advances, she extends her inviting hand to all. Temperance follows; she bears a goblet of pure water, clear as crystal, and sparkling as the gem—her eye is radiant with life, her cheek blooming with health—her form active, and her step buoyant. Charity follows, leaning upon the arm of Virtue—her figure concealed by an ample veil, and her eyes cast upon the ground. Domestic happiness follows. She is represented by a lovely woman, giving one hand to her husband, and leading her child by the other. Industry and Abundance bring up the train—the one looks cheerful and contented,

the other merry and joyous. She has golden wheat ears around her brow, and a girdle of green about her waist. Fruits and flowers are in her right hand, "and in her left hand riches and honor." By their exertions for the spiritual welfare of seamen, these societies have in numberless instances put them in possession of these blessings, have made the intemperate sober, the sensual chaste, the imprudent economical, the idle industrious, and thus have brought happiness and prosperity to many households. Oh, brethren! assist in the prosecution of such a work as this, and then the unfortunate beings now sailors, will soon be unfortunate no longer.

2. But again, they are unfortunate in the hardships they endure and the dangers they encounter.

For months, and perhaps even for years, they are estranged from the comforts, the blessings, and the endearments of home—the boy from his mother, the husband from his wife, the father from his children. The boy dreams of home—there are spread before him the play-grounds of his childhood; he sees the very cottage where he was born—it is embosomed in trees; the rose, the jessamine, and the honeysuckle, entwine with their intermingled sweets its trellised porch; he sees the mother he adores, the brothers and sisters he loves, but he no sooner tries to clasp them in his arms, than behold it is a dream!

The husband dreams—the voyage is ended, the harbor gained, the anchor dropped, the sails furled, the crew dismissed, and he hastens upon the wings of affection to his dwelling. He knocks impatiently—who opens the door? One whom he loves as his own soul. He hears her exclamation of delight, he sees her eyes flash with joy—but he no sooner would fold her to his heart, than behold it is a dream!

The father dreams—his family are assembled in the accustomed room, his children are there—his wife is there—he is seen—his little one holds out its hands for his embrace—and the glad cry of recognition comes from all—but he would no sooner impress the longed-for kiss upon his infant's brow, than behold it is a dream!

But separation from home is only the beginning of the sailor's trials. You are to remember that that separation often takes place under the most painful circumstances. When disease perhaps, has invaded his household, threatening home with the bereavement of wife or children. Stern necessity tears him away from their bed of sickness, and from what often proves their bed of death. He goes away, too, without the consolation of knowing that they are among friends; neglected himself, they whose fortunes are identified with his, share his destinies. They are sailor's wives, sailor's children, and he leaves them with many an anxious thought about the future. But we thank God that at least in many ports his anxiety on this head is now made groundless.

This society, and many others of a similar character throughout the land, employ those who, full of love to God and man, visit the families of absent seamen, relieve them in distress, comfort them in sorrow, and speak to them of Him who is "the husband of the widow, and the father of the fatherless." But to return to the sailor. There is only one class of men whose lives are more shortened by the nature of their occupation than his, and those men do not work above ground. They labor in mines, and amid foul exhalations and noxious vapors, dig out for others the treasures of the earth. With their exception, the sailor's life is shorter than that of any operatives. And why? Because the treacherous element upon which he sails, and the capricious winds to which he trusts, oblige him by snatches to take his rest; because he wanders through all climes, from the equator to the pole—now scorching with heat, then freezing with cold. Because he works in all weathers; and because the worse the weather, the harder he must work. In the rain storm, when it descends in torrents, and continues so long as not to leave him a change of clothing in his chest. In the sleet, in the snow, in the frost, when the rigging becomes like jagged steel, and the sails like sheet iron. In the tempest, when the masts quiver like reeds, when the winds rage and the seas roar, when the good ship struggles as it were for life, now plunging as though in despair, into the depths below, and then rising, as if with exultation, on the towering wave. Then must the sailor work; and it is these hardships, this severe toil, this constant exposure, that shortens his life. But alas it may be fearfully shortened by other causes than the wear and tear of his calling. How often, in the discharge of some perilous duty aloft, is he precipitated into the deep, and swallowed up by the devouring waters! How often cast away! How often the victim of the malignant diseases of foreign climes. How many sailors have met with an untimely death from the club of the savage, the sword of the foe, or the desperate charge of the wounded whale! But there would be no end of particularizing in this way the perils and hardships of a seaman's life. I must appeal to the hurricane and the battle, to the ocean with its dark caverns, and to foreign shores with their unburied dead. I must call upon the thousands who have gone down with the waves for their winding sheet, and who await in their deep sepulchres the resurrection of the dead, to bear witness what toils, what dangers, and what sufferings are the sailor's lot.

We may observe, however, that sailors commonly die at sea. Death, bitter at any time, must have its bitterness exceedingly increase under such circumstances. A ship is no hospital. None but able-bodied men are rated on her books; and if sickness befall they must take their chance. The medicine chest, perhaps, is the only proof on board that such a calamity was ever thought of.

Where does the sailor die? In a cheerful room? On a couch of feathers and a pillow of down? Waited on by an attentive nurse? Watched over by anxious friends? Surrounded by sobbing and weeping relatives? Far different. In that wretched hole where a suspended lantern just gives light enough to show the seaman's chest by which it is encumbered. In that rude hammock, swinging from the beam. There is his bed, and there too is his shroud. There is no minister of Christ there, to listen to his wailings over an ill-spent life, or to awaken him to a sense of his sin and danger. There is no messenger of love there, to speak of Jesus and point him to that anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast. No herald of that salvation which, "like the ocean itself, rises above high water mark, overtops the mountains of sin, and washes away the guilt of every penitent transgressor." He dies without comfort in this world, and too often without hope in another.

But suppose the dying sailor to have enjoyed in former years the fostering care of this society, how different in all probability would be his end. Then he would have in his possession the Word of God; then he would call to mind as he lay in his loneliness, many a solemn truth—many an earnest prayer—many a kind exhortation—many an encouraging promise which he had heard from the mouth of its Missionary. Then, perhaps, his danger would strike him like a thunderbolt—his heart might be smitten—he might shed tears of penitence, and cry out with affecting earnestness, "Lord save, or I perish." I remember hearing of a sailor who in a storm at sea was observed sitting unmoved with a Bible in his hand, and was heard to say, "Courage, my lads, we are as near heaven at sea as on shore;" and oh! if you would but give the sailor the word of God—if you but watch over his soul when he returns to port—if you would provide for his religious instruction when he makes the land—a hope might be breathed into his bosom, a peace imparted to his spirit, which the prospect of death in any shape could neither disturb nor take away. He might be swallowed up by the waters—he might be cut down in the battle—he might be murdered by the savage—he might be mangled by the rocks—he might die away from home and kindred, on board his ship—but under all circumstances, he could exclaim with the Apostle Paul, "If my earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved, I know I have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

3. I observe, lastly, that sailors are unfortunate in the treatment they meet with when they arrive in port.

No sooner does the anchor of a return ship reach the bottom, than her crew are surrounded by thieves in the disguise of honest men. The simple hearted sailor is to be their prey; his hard-earned wages their plunder. They salute him in his own hearty

fashion, and with many false professions and flattering speeches; lure him to their dens—low houses where they minister to his intemperance and sensuality—give him the bowl and the harlot—pander to his vices and applaud his profligacy. This, however, does not last long—impatient for their nefarious harvest, they produce their bill, which the sailor, who has been half the time insensible, is obliged to pay. He has lost in a few days the reward perhaps of years of incessant toil—the price of many a risk of life and limb. He must either go into the streets or brave again the dangers of the ocean, only to return and suffer again the same imposture. Have we any sense of justice? Any feelings of humanity? If we be not more cruel than death, and more unmerciful than the grave, we must feel indignant at such oppression.

But how can he be delivered from the jaws of these devourers? You are to remember that their houses are the only ones open for his convenience. It is vain to say that he could find accommodation where landsmen find it. Seamen are gregarious in their habits; they love to live together. The only plan is that which this Society is anxious to accomplish—to build a Sailor's Home—large enough to accommodate all applicants, comfortable enough to find favor in the eyes of seamen, and handsome enough to be creditable to the city where it stands. A *cheap* home, where, instead of being plundered, the sailor would be able to save a large proportion of what he earns. A *moral* home, where, in place of profaneness and vice, he would find temperance, soberness and chastity. An *intellectual* home, supplied with books of an instructive, interesting and useful character. A *religious* home with religious superintendence, religious worship, conducted by religious men, upon religious principles. In the temporary establishments of this kind, two in number, which the Pennsylvania Seamen's Friend Society now sustains, there have been accommodated during the past year 776 seamen, 470 of whom have, under its auspices, renounced the use of intoxicating drinks, and many of them become new creatures in Christ Jesus. Public worship has been held in these buildings every Sabbath, daily family prayer offered up in the household, and the Scriptures, with other religious books, given to the inmates on their going to sea. Encourage such a charity as this, and a change will speedily be wrought upon the character, the standing, and the destinies of this invaluable class of men; instead of being a by-word and a reproach among all nations—instead of impeding by their example, the progress of the Gospel abroad, and encouraging by their vices the march of impiety at home, they will carry a blessing wherever they go—they will earn for themselves a high place in public esteem—they will be itinerant missionaries of the Church of Christ, and hasten that period when "the earth shall

'be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea."

And now, if the past neglect which the sailor has experienced—if the value and jeopardy of his immortal soul—if his numbers, his degradation, his misfortunes, his hardships, his perils and his melancholy end—if these be insufficient to touch your hearts and open your hands, what additional motives can I urge in his behalf. If you have a spark of that generosity for which the sailor is so distinguished—of that gratitude for which he is so proverbial, your offerings to-night towards the emancipation of his mind from ignorance, and of his soul from vice, and of his body from oppression, will be large and liberal.

There are no individuals in this assembly who are not deeply in the sailor's debt. Men of science, what a revenue of knowledge has the sailor contributed to your treasury, and through you to the world at large. How many weary circumnavigations of the globe has he accomplished—how many previously unknown lands has he discovered! He has enriched your cabinets with the most curious productions of foreign climes. Your records teem with his observations upon distant countries, and with speculations founded upon his researches.

Commercial men, your obligations to the seaman are of greater magnitude. He has not embarked in your service in order to determine the figure of the earth, or to observe the transit of a planet, or to ascertain the locality of the magnetic pole. You have sent him forth to do business on great waters—to traffic with the savage on his treacherous coast—to chase the leviathan on the watery waste—to bring the fabrics of the East from their distant looms, and the rich furs of the north from their frozen homes—to endure hardships, to face dangers, to abandon friends—to peril life, in order that you may be rich as princes and wealthy as kings.

I repeat—there are no individuals in this assembly who are not deeply in the sailor's debt. I see many a fashionable woman here to-night who would help to bear me out in this assertion. She is attired in the trophies of the seaman's hardihood. Those gracefully drooping plumes he brought from Africa; that magnificent shawl from Thibet; those furs which protect her from the winter's blast, from the bleak regions of Siberia; those rich silks, from China, and those sparkling gems from the remotest islands of the Indian Ocean. In her dwelling she is surrounded with similar proofs of the sailor's daring. When she comes down in a morning she finds on her breakfast table the productions of the Indies, East and West; her eye rests upon the carpets of Turkey, the mirrors of France, and a thousand other articles of use or elegance which were produced or manufactured in distant climes.

If, again, we are interested in the conversion and civilization

of the globe—if we are engaged in the mighty work of sending into heathen lands the Gospel and the temporal blessings which follow in its train, we are indebted to the sailor for carrying into effect the benevolent design.

If we have any love of country, any regard for those who protect its trade, defend its rights, maintain its honor, how can we feel otherwise than under the deepest obligation to the gallant sailor who is continually hazarding his life for these ends?

I leave his cause, then, in your hands. Assist him with a little of that wealth for which some of you are so largely indebted to his bravery and fortitude. Add your name to the list of the contributors to this Society, and you will not only have the pleasure of knowing that you have discharged a duty and performed a charitable deed, but in that day when the sea shall give up its dead, you may have the unspeakable satisfaction of receiving the blessing of thousands who were ready to perish, had not you compassionated their sorrows and relieved their sufferings. AMEN.

SERMON DCLXVII.

BY REV. C. MOORE,

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EARTH TRANSITORY—HEAVEN ABIDING.

"For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come."—HEB. xiii. 14.

THE term city, as here employed, is intended to teach the transitory nature of earthly homes and comforts, and also to show forth the permanent and the enduring character of the Christian's glorious home in heaven. The kingdom of future glory is in the Bible called a city—a holy city, because of its holy laws, ordinances, and citizens. It is also called the city of God, because he planned, built, rules, protects, and dwells in it. The church on earth is sometimes called a city,—Christ is represented as the foundation of it; truth, the towers of it; ordinances, the palaces of it; and the walls of it, the promises and the protection of God. In the text, however, the obvious design of the term is to represent the unchanging state of blessedness which shall constitute the Christian's final home, in contrast with the changing and mutable character of all earthly cities. Various figures are employed in the sacred Scriptures to set forth, in a strong point of view, the vanity and uncertainty of all earthly affairs, as also to exhibit the substantial excellences and fadeless glories of the *rest*

that remains "to the people of God." And among these choice, heaven-selected specimens of representation, the one we have chosen to consider occupies a pre-eminent place.

There are two propositions contained in this subject, which I shall consider in the order in which they present themselves. I. That *here we have no continuing city*. II. I shall describe briefly the character of the one Christians are seeking: "*But we seek one to come.*"

I. First, then, we call attention to the fact that *here we have no continuing city*. And is it not almost a self-evident truth? Do we not daily see and feel that it is even so? Has not your own experience convinced you, long since, that it is painfully true? If not, look for a moment at the history of the earth on which you dwell.

What does it present? Is it not a gloomy and melancholy picture of fading, changing scenes, which almost elude the grasp of the mind in its attempt to contemplate them? The universal voice of this world's recorded history proclaims uncertainty and change in everything human and earthly. The historic pen has written decay in indelible characters on the mightiest works of man. It unites with the pen of inspiration in inscribing mutability on all things below the sun. The towers and monuments of antiquity, the cities and pyramids, where are they? Let recorded facts answer. Those mighty empires, too, that once rose in grandeur and in power, have gone down in gloom, and now live only in the remembrances of departed greatness. With respect to things of earth, whether cities or towns, or peaceful country houses, all are alike perishing. Some are more enduring than others, with respect to some of the elements of existence; but all, sooner or later, yield to force of devouring time.

If, therefore, I show the instability of the most substantial of earth's possessions, my first proposition will be sustained; and to effect this, I shall note but *two instances* out of the multitude which crowd and throng the voluminous history of our world? Where *now is Babylon*?—once the pride and glory of the Chaldees! That splendid city was once the pride and admiration of the Eastern world. It was rich, powerful, and magnificent. In the extent of its wealth, the splendor of its structures, and the strength of its fortifications, it was unrivalled by any city of antiquity. It is recorded concerning it, that it occupied a circumference of sixty square miles. It was surrounded by a wall on each side, fifteen miles long, eighty-seven feet thick, and three hundred and fifty feet high. To this wall were attached one hundred gates—twenty-five on each side; from these proceeded twenty-five streets, crossing each other at right angles, thus forming the whole into six hundred and twenty-six squares. The gates were of solid brass. Towers also were attached to the walls—three between each gate, and seven at each

corner. The celebrated temple of *Belus* occupied a square near the centre of the city, the riches of which alone amounted to ninety-four millions of dollars. Its vessels and statues were of massy gold. It is unnecessary, however, to adduce further particulars to show the greatness of this city. Suffice it to say, that, according to history, it was one of the mightiest combinations of wealth, strength, and splendor, that the world ever beheld. But where, we inquire, is the glory of Babylon? Where slumbers her power and her grandeur? The same history that records her *glory* reveals her fate. The same hand that unveils her *greatness* points to her obscurity. Even the site of her former magnificence cannot now with certainty be ascertained. It is admitted, however, to be a spot, dreary, desolate, and waste; the habitation of prowling beasts and loathsome reptiles—in every respect gloomy and forbidding. Such is the melancholy fate of one of the greatest cities that ever graced our globe; and such the triumph of time over man's proudest achievements.

Take another instance: Glance for a moment at the history of *Jerusalem*. That city, peculiarly favored of Heaven—the theatre of the most astonishing manifestations of the Divine power and presence. Surely if any earthly city could withstand the changes incident to this world, it would be the one chosen of God—sacredly and specially consecrated to his service, and bearing his own holy name. Here was the residence of King David, declared by inspiration to be “a man after God’s own heart.” Here was Solomon’s Temple, in which were combined the beautiful, the splendid, and the sublime. Its brazen altars, its golden vessels and candlesticks, and other adornments, amounting to many thousand tons weight of gold and silver, together with the external magnificence of the building, formed an object of unrivalled beauty and splendor. This temple, with all its wealth and beauty, was dedicated unto the Lord. But where is now the glory of Jerusalem, and the splendor of the holy temple? Would not divine power be interposed for their protection and defence? Would not God himself secure his own chosen city from lawless violence or destroying time? No; he never designed it to be permanent. With all its high privileges and peculiar blessings, it was, nevertheless, a sinful city, and as such, could not be abiding. And from its destruction and desolation, the truth that earth is vanity, and all her cities perishing, is perpetually announced, as in a voice of thunder.

If the Almighty gave up that city, rendered almost sacred by so many hallowed associations, to the ravages of the universal destroyer, what favored spot on all the globe may now hope for his protection? Surely none. *Jerusalem was destroyed*: and the fact is an enduring and eloquent monument, speaking to us, and proclaiming to all generations, the mutability of all things earthly. And for the benevolent purpose of lifting up and fixing

the hearts of men on things above—things as enduring as the immortal mind—the truth is uttered as with a thousand tongues. The voice of history speaks it; the word of God teaches it; and universal observation and experience loudly proclaim it. Yet how slow is man to believe, and how much slower to act as though he believed, the truth so clearly taught. Earth fades from his view, but he perceives it not. The foundation of his hopes and happiness crumbles under his feet, but he feels it not. The prize of immortality glitters before him in the sunbeams of mercy, but he sees it not. But to those who close not their eyes against the light of history, experience, and the *Bible*, the truth of our first proposition must appear abundantly evident. And to those who exercise aright their powers of mind and heart, and improve the grace of God given them, light from eternity breaks forth and reveals the holy city—the continuing city. It is not here. It is yet to come. It is finally to descend from heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband, lit up with the glory of God, and vocal with celestial sounds, for the reception of the followers of Jesus.

II. I pass to notice briefly the character of that glorious city, as it is figuratively revealed in the Divine word. It is called a “city of habitations.” Abraham, it is said, “looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.” And again it is said of the faithful, that “they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.” But how shall we speak of it? How can I set forth the excellences of the city of our God? I cannot give you clear ideas concerning it. On this subject, mortal language is too poor to give a clear and full representation. Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, nor hath it entered the heart to conceive, adequately and clearly, the glories of the Christian’s final home. Yet we are not left entirely in the dark: a few rays stream from the sacred world, and faintly illumine the sublime scenery. The beloved John the Divine, on his lonely isle, had a few rich specimens dropt down fresh from heaven, which he has collected and embodied in the form of a description. The outlines given in this description, although brief and general in their character, flash light from the upper world on this alluring subject, and furnish at least an obscure picture of the Holy City.

It is represented as descending out of heaven from God, “Having the glory of God; and its light like unto stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal; and having a wall great and high, and twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel.” Here the strength and security of the city are intimated. Mark ye well her bulwarks: consider her

divine fortifications. View her walls of precious stone—her pearly gates, “on golden hinges turning.” Her invulnerable battlements—her foundation garnished with all manner of precious stone. But the glorious *light* of this city is another element of its perfect safety and perpetual security. The glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. Nothing unholy or impure can ever dwell in this light. All who are permitted to dwell within its sacred precincts will be eternally free from everything that can disturb their peace or mar their felicity. “The nations of them that are saved shall walk in the light of it, and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it.” The light and holiness of heaven must ever prove one of the mightiest guards of security against rude or unholy intrusion. The occupants of that happy world will be guarded from every natural ill, and defended from every spiritual foe. They ever dwell in the milder light of God’s approving smile, and the glorious presence of their awful God, as an encircling cloud of rolling fire, shall shine for the defence and glory of the celestial citadel.

Another attraction is, that it is a commodious and well furnished city. It contains many mansions, spacious apartments, and unfailing crystal fountains. It affords ample accommodations for a multitude of saints and angels, which no man can number. A pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God; and the tree of life spreading wide its branches, and bearing luxuriously its fruits and healing leaves, furnish the citizens with unfailing supplies.

But the beauty and splendor of this city stagger the imagination, and bid defiance to the powers of description. Its magnificence is unique and altogether peculiar. It is a *golden* city. Its streets, its avenues, and all its sacred palaces, shine with a transparency like unto clear glass. Its lofty domes reflect celestial rays, and its turrets glitter in the sunlight of unclouded glory.

And the entertainments of heaven, how delightful! The music of that holy city, how charming! It is to be a world of song—a society of the most illustrious and finished performers. Harps tuned to the melodies of the skies—voices harmonized to the new song and to angelic-anthems, constitute the celestial choir. Soft notes resound through the blissful apartments: the thrilling strains are wafted melodiously on the balmy breezes. Joy, and gladness, and immortal triumph, are the themes which inspire their tongues and employ their golden lyres. The melody is enchanting. No discord ever mars the music of heaven: it is perfect. It rolls a tide of extatic influence over all the regions of glory, which thrills and enraptures, and charms every susceptibility of the soul.

The climate, too, of that happy world, will be adapted to promote the highest degree of felicity among all its inhabitants. No midsummer’s burning beams or blighting winds ever oppress

their active faculties. No chilling, cheerless, wintry blast is ever heard or felt. The extremes of heat and cold are unknown. Perfect health reigns in every system, and blooms on every countenance. A joyous clime of perpetual salubrity, forever undisturbed by poisonous vapor, pervades all the heavenly region. Odors of Eden—zephyrs perfumed by the flowers of a perennial Paradise, waft their gentle refreshing influence around every dwelling, and along every avenue.

There—"Sickness and sorrow, pain and death,
Are felt and feared no more."

But there—"The rivers of pleasure flow o'er the bright plains,
And the noontide of glory eternally reigns."

The sacred pleasures of the holy city will be greatly enhanced by the kindly dispositions and friendly intercourse of its citizens. The society of heaven is, and ever will be, of the most exalted kind. Patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and martyrs—the good and the truly great of all ages and generations will be there. Every pure and noble spirit that ever adorned this dark world will be there. Every one who loved God and virtue here will join that blissful society. The *holy*, the excellent, the truly dignified, from every clime, kindred, and country on the face of the whole earth, will, as if drawn by the irresistible laws of moral attraction, meet at that common centre of light and purity. They will there unite with an unnumbered multitude of holy angels in the employments of the heavenly world.

And these countless numbers of glorified beings shall be of one heart and one mind. No discordant feeling or jarring sentiment ever interrupts the harmony of heaven. They all love, and praise, and serve the Lord. They are all Divinity students. The book of Universal Theology unfolds its ample pages and sheds the light of pure truth all around them. No tiresome process is requisite there. Truth has not to be dug out as an hid treasure, or traced as a fugitive through the dim lights of letters and sentences: it there beams forth from its essential fountain in stereotyped characters of divinity. And none are unemployed there. Not one indifferent spectator in all the heavenly ranks. All gaze and admire, and wonder and adore. Every mind will be divinely fledged for an unwearied uninterrupted flight—a boundless excursion, learning and admiring the works and ways of God forever.

But the highest excellence of this city is its durability. It is a continuing city; an eternal city. It was built for eternity, and not for time. It is fire-proof and time-proof. If, with all its magnificence and indescribable beauty, it were subject to those vicissitudes which attend our earthly cities, it would not be so desirable. But the crowning glory of this city is its eternity.

The grand arch-stone of its splendor is that it knows no deterioration. Its foundations were laid by the great Architect of the universe. He designs it to *stand* while endless ages are rolling onward. He intends it to be as enduring as the immortal inhabitants who occupy it. He designs its existence to be commensurate with his own. And shall his design be frustrated? Shall not God's work stand? What can destroy it? Can floods? or fire? or sword? or principalities or powers? or angels? or devils? or old Time with his wasting scythe? No! Neither powers above nor powers below, can ever move its mighty walls, or shake its firm embattlements. Nor can time ever leave the marks of his decaying fingers on its humble abode. It stands immovably and unchangeably fixed on the base of its own eternity. Its structure proclaims its divinity. It bears inscribed in characters of living light, on its loftiest pinnacles and lowliest dwellings, the ever during impress of immortality.

What a *contrast* does this picture present to our decaying and dilapidated homes and cities in this world! Here, in this vain, changing, and fading world, everything is unstable, fluctuating, and insecure. No inheritance that is permanent—no pleasure uninterrupted by pain—no wealth that is enduring—no happiness that is perfectly suited to the immortal mind. Friends, the nearest and dearest, are in a moment torn away by the ruthless hand of Death. The brightest earthly prospects are blighted in an instant, and the sunshine of hope extinguished by thick clouds of despair. There is no spot on earth where man can fix his residence with the rational hope of permanent bliss. But on heaven's peaceful shore all is glorious, and shall forever be fadeless and changeless. The choice treasures of the universe are there collected, and far above the contamination of sin or the decaying influences of time, they shall remain unharmed forever, an inheritance for saints and angels, indestructible as the throne of God.

This splendid city is the Christian's future home. It is the place he is seeking; and the certain prospect of attaining to its yet unexplored glories, comforts and cheers the Christian pilgrim amid the blasts of adversity and storms of persecution which beat upon him in this world. It is the glorious rest that remains to the people of God, when the storms, and toils, and tumults of mortal life shall be overpast. Well may the Christian say—"Let time fly; let my days and weeks speed their flight—'They'll waft us sooner o'er this life's tempestuous sea.' Let the lying vanities of time cheat those that trust in them; but O, my soul! forever praise the Lord, that he has revealed unto thee the un-failing treasure—an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and eternal." Perhaps now you suffer affliction, poverty, reproach—well, endure a little longer, as seeing Him who is invisible. You shall soon exchange your present condition for a brighter, better, happier world.

Those eyes that are now given to penitential weeping, shall shortly be opened on scenes of glory, and every tear be wiped away. That voice that now supplicates mercy, shall soon join the songs of triumph. That hand that is now doomed to daily toil, shall ere long be made immortal, and taught to strike skilfully a golden harp, whose notes shall swell the anthems of the redeemed.

There are some who will not be persuaded to seek a mansion in that city. They are too busy pursuing the little interests of this world, to think much about the Heavenly Jerusalem. If an angel were to descend from the immediate neighborhood of God's throne, and paint for them the beauties of this city, in the dialect of Heaven, he could scarcely gain their attention; he could not induce them to forego their petty trifles, and seek a better inheritance. Houses and lands, precarious wealth, sordid pleasures, and deceitful honors, engage their hearts and employ their thoughts. They seem to forget that they have to die. They live as though inspiration had never written—"Here have we no continuing city." They have made choice of a momentary good, and they "strive to think it best." Are there not multitudes that are acting thus? That there are we cannot doubt.

Of such, I would seriously inquire, why do you thus slight your deathless interests? Is it rational? or is it safe? Does it comport with the dignity of your immortal nature, thus to bury all your hopes and fears, your toils and cares, in this clod of earth? Can it render you lasting pleasure? You know it cannot. Will you, then, have a home in Heaven? Will you be persuaded to accept a share in that blessed inheritance? You can have it, "without money, and without price." And do you not feel that you need something more enduring than this world can give? Do you not know and sometimes feel, that the world can never give that which is necessary to satisfy the longing desires of your soul? Well, God your Saviour has purchased a home for your undying spirit, where your every reasonable desire may be gratified.

But permit me to assure you, that it is not in this world. The earth, with all its splendid palaces and stately mansions, its towns and cities, its delightful country seats and pleasant cottages, will ere long be "burned up." When the globe shall be set on fire by the hand of Omnipotence, all its glittering objects of splendor and pleasure will become fuel for the general conflagration. And even now, how precarious are all your earthly possessions, and how changing the scenes of pleasure you "fondly call your own?" And how extremely uncertain all your present enjoyments? What care, anxiety, and toil are constantly requisite to keep your earthly abodes from falling into disorder and confusion. Your garments are waxing old—your substance is decaying—your gold and silver depreciating—your farms are growing up with noxious weeds—and even your barns and store-

houses are yielding to the claims of an imperious ever-changing influence. The very houses in which you live are slowly but surely, crumbling into ruins. Everything around you is wasting away, and falling before the corroding touch of all-conquering time. Your earthly possessions are subject, not only to natural and certain decay, but to how many frightful disasters are they constantly exposed? Flood, fire, and tempest, and almost every disorder attending this sin-cursed world, render property exceedingly precarious. Proof positive that this fleeting state is not your home.

And your present life—what is it? To how many terrible accidents and painful diseases is it perpetually exposed? It is short at best, even a vapor. Your bodies may now enclose the seeds of disease which are soon to grow and ripen in death. "The sands of your hour-glass are perpetually dropping out; the ordinary process will soon exhaust it." How often is the silver cord loosed, or the golden bowl broken? They must shortly and certainly yield to the decree of Jehovah, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." How frequently is the silver cord loosed, or the golden bowl broken, or the pitcher dashed in pieces at the fountain, by the operation of causes which you can neither foresee nor evade? And when death comes, what wilt thou then do? Where wilt thou find a habitation for thy immortal spirit? It cannot decay—it cannot die. If you have no inheritance in Heaven, where, O where, will you find a resting-place, when by the strong arm of the Almighty you are driven from this world? If you are then without a mansion in the city of our God, what will become of you? Where will you find a refuge—where will you take shelter? Ah! there will be no refuge for you, who have no home in Heaven. You shall then be doomed to be a homeless, shelterless, forlorn wanderer on the shores of a miserable eternity, exposed to the pelting storms of Divine wrath forever; or you will then become the wretched inmate of the prison-house of eternal despair, where an impassible gulf will be fixed firmly and forever between you and the faintest gleam of hope and happiness. Be persuaded *now* to come to Christ; accept his great salvation: then, in the time of your greatest need, you shall have a place and a portion with all the redeemed in the city of our God.

"When shall these eyes thy heaven-built walls
And pearly gates behold?
Thy bulwarks with salvation strong,
And streets of shining gold?
O, when, thou city of my God,
Shall I thy courts ascend,
Where congregations ne'er break up
And Sabbaths have no end?"

THE OLD YEAR AND THE NEW YEAR.

WE have accompanied our readers near to the close of another of the years of our pilgrimage, and the commencement of a new. We cannot but avail ourselves of the occasion to recollect, for our common benefit, that it is wise to talk with our past hours, and prudent to enter thoughtfully upon the uncertainties of a future, which, as it unveils itself and discloses its aspects and allotments, should deeply affect us all. We have read of a lofty mountain in Switzerland, from the top of which the shadow of the traveller is thrown by the setting sun far into the distance on the one side, and by the rising sun far into the distance on the other, so that, looking from this craggy and cloud-crowned pinnacle, he may see his own outline, his shadowy form, floating on mist and vapor midway between earth and heaven. On such a pinnacle we seem to stand, when an Old Year merges in the Past, and a New opens the portals of the Future. Far, far away, hovering over the mists and dim distances of the Past, our own image rises, and is held suspended, fixed, while all beneath and around is floating; palpable and distinctly defined, while all things else are melting into one another, and dissolving into chaos. And if we look to the Future, and strain the eye to catch glimpses of its forthcoming realities, or strive with the ear to detect some distinct utterance amid the confusion of its sounds, which like the mysterious, sad moanings of the sea-shell, awaken curiosity—the only distinct thing that stands forth is the shadow of ourselves, the only clear utterance that strikes the listening ear is the echo of our own. In few words, it is our own character which gives character and interest to the past and future. If our own souls be dark, polluted, and vile, our past is veiled in darkness, and our future is without sunshine or beauty—a region of clouds and storms. There is a power and a principle which can cover the hideous blackness of the past, and throw serene calms, and beams of soft and holy light into all futurity. Need we tell our readers what we must do and be, in order to secure oblivion for years departed and blessedness for all futurity? “*So let us number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.*”—*Ch. Parlor Mag.*

